

# Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

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Saturday, April 22, 2006

## Camp Fire

Dozens of firearms were destroyed after a fire hit two buildings inside the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio before dawn yesterday.

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## Asianovelas

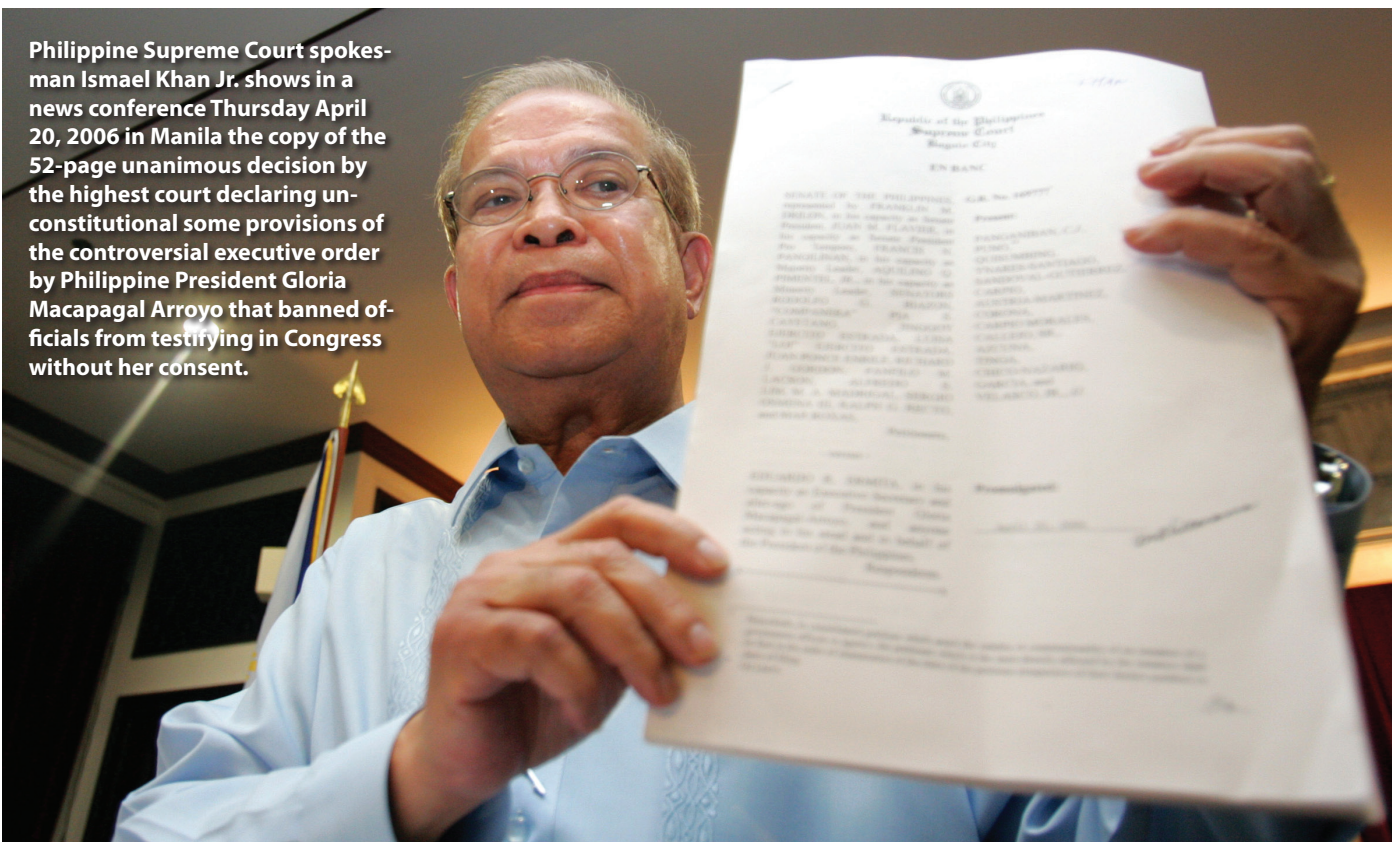
The Philippines is the fourth biggest buyer of Asianovelas, according to Leng Raymundo, ABS-CBN vice president for program acquisition.

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AP

Philippine Supreme Court spokesman Ismael Khan Jr. shows in a news conference Thursday April 20, 2006 in Manila the copy of the 52-page unanimous decision by the highest court declaring unconstitutional some provisions of the controversial executive order by Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo that banned officials from testifying in Congress without her consent.



# SC limits Arroyo ban

## On officials testifying in Congress

By OLIVER TEVES  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—The Philippine Supreme Court on Thursday struck down portions of an executive order by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo that had banned officials from testifying in Congress without her approval.

The order, issued last year, angered the opposition and Arroyo's critics, who accused her of trying to cover up alleged

wrongdoing amid her worst political crisis. It had banned bureaucrats, police and military officers from appearing for congressional investigations without Arroyo's written consent.

The Supreme Court said the order was invalid for testimony sought by Congress in aid of hearings on legislation.

"We respect and accept the Supreme Court's ruling," said presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye, who urged "certain members of Congress" not to conduct hearings to "harass public officials or to push a particular political agenda as we have seen in the past."

He said Congress should use its time to push urgent legislation, particularly a pending

anti-terrorism bill.

Supreme Court spokesman Ismael Khan said the unanimous ruling does not impinge on the separation of powers between the executive and the legislative branches.

"But Congress must observe its own rules ... and the rights of their witnesses they hail into these sessions should be respected," he said.

The decision declared as "invalid" the portion of Arroyo's executive order disallowing Cabinet officials, military generals and other senior armed forces and police officers and security officials from attending legislative hearings. It also invalidated a requirement for "prior consent" from the president before appear-

ing in a hearing.

The court, however, upheld the president's right to give permission to officials who appear in a so-called "question hour"—a rarely held session in which non-lawmakers directly answer questions from legislators not directly related to any pending bill.

It also upheld the right of the president to ask for a closed-door session if the "security of the state or the public interest so requires."

The court said it was "impermissible" for officials to hide behind the president's order to avoid appearing in congressional hearings and for the president to evade requests for information without explaining why to Congress.

# Palace orders implementation of nat'l ID system

By GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.  
INQUIRER

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the immediate implementation of the national identification card system a day after the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the project.

Malacañang executives want a national ID to be a mandatory requirement in all government

transactions and will encourage the private sector to require the same.

"President Arroyo has given the go-signal to the Cabinet to get the ID system in one form or another and this is the way we can keep up with the rest of the world," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the

**PALACE Page 2**

## OSCAR YEMA

# Creating a scene

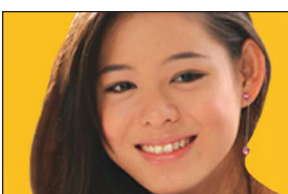
By AGNES E. DONATO  
REPORTER

It's all about keeping it real.

Multimedia artist Oscar Yema thus describes the huge, diverse body of work he has done over his almost 15-year career, first in television and now in film.

"Telling real stories, that's always been my passion," Yema says in an interview. "It's a habit I have developed because of

**CREATING Page 2**



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# PINOYNEWS

## New rules for Filipino kids traveling abroad

The Philippine Overseas Labor Office in the CNMI is informing Filipinos in the CNMI of the new guidelines for minors traveling alone abroad.

In a notice posted at its bulletin board in the POLO office in Nauru Building in Susupe, it explained about the Phil-

ippine government's simplification of the process for minors that are traveling overseas.

The report said that children 18 years old and below do not need a travel clearance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development

anymore if the minors are traveling abroad with either a parent or with a legal guardian.

If the minors are traveling alone and can show proof that their parents are in the foreign service or are living abroad, then they have to show a dependent's

visa, a valid pass or ID that will show that they are living with their parents overseas. However, a clearance must still be secured from the DSWD as the agency's measure against human trafficking. The clearance must be presented at the airport by the minors liv-

ing in the Philippines who are traveling alone or are accompanied by persons other than their parents.

The report said the new guidelines took effect in March under that DSWD administrative order 02-2006. **(Marconi Calindas)**

### CREATING

FROM PAGE 1

my news industry background. I have talked to different kinds of people and I have been exposed to a lot of different things, like poverty, crime, nasty lawsuits. Many of the news stories I've done were odd, but they were all true. That's why, even in film, I want things to be realistic as possible."

A "slice of life," he maintains, was something that he and the rest of the cast and crew strived to present in Mga Pusang Gala (Stray Cats). The independent Filipino film has earned critical acclaim back home and abroad for its witty portrayal of love, sex and gender roles. It has been shown in film festivals in Manila, Switzerland, and San Francisco.

As line producer, Yema was involved in both the administrative and creative aspects of making the movie.

Yema was originally trained in broadcast journalism. He received his degree in mass communication from the University of the Philippines and has worked for the Philippines' two biggest television networks over a 10-year period.

He served as director, executive producer, segment producer, and researcher for ABS CBN Broadcasting Corporation, which distributes The Filipino Channel. His credits include well-known news and public affairs programs such as *Companera y Companera*, *Assignment*, *Magandang Gabi Bayan*, *Hoy Gising*, *TV Patrol World*, and *Inside Story*.

He also directed or produced TV

shows under GMA Network Inc., including *Eat Bulaga*, *Imbestigador*, *Emergency*, *Saksi Newscast*, *Brigada Siete*, *Pira-Pirasong Pangarap*, and *GMA Telesine*.

He left Philippine television in 2002 to concentrate on filmmaking. He has since helped direct a digital movie titled *Angels* starring Filipino character actress Gina Alajar, and a TV series for Singapore TV Works.

Currently, Yema almost single-handedly produces video projects for Luen Thai and Tan Holdings Corp. on Saipan. He also serves as operations manager for M2A2 Productions, a production company he helped established, and as corporate affairs manager for Villa Anna Paradise Resort and Farm in Oriental Mindoro, a popular tourist destination in the Philippines.

Oscar Yema at work.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



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### PALACE

FROM PAGE 1

ID system would be up and running in a few months. He said the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), which would oversee the project, had been given less than 30 days to come up with its mechanics.

While Defensor said the databases of both the Social Security System (SSS) and the Government Service and Insurance System (GSIS) would simply be merged, NEDA chief Romulo Neri said the national ID system would include data from the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth).

Defensor explained that the goal was to synchronize all state-issued IDs with all citizens expected to have one number for quick reference and profiling.

He said that government agencies would make it mandatory for all individuals dealing with them to use the national ID to facilitate their transactions. "We would also encourage the private sector to do the same," said Defensor.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the national ID system under Executive Order No. 420 and rejected claims that it violated an individual's right to privacy.

Andres Bautista, dean of the Far Eastern University Institute of Law, said the court decision was a good one because it ruled the ID system was not compulsory and that any information

requested was already available in the public domain.

### Phantom fears

Bunye hailed the Supreme Court decision "not only because of its contribution to national security but its effect in facilitating the delivery of vital government programs and services to the Filipino people."

"Issues adverting to infringement of human rights are phantom fears," said Bunye. "The system has enough safeguards to protect the citizen from imagined violations of the right to privacy."

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno told the Inquirer that there was no need to gather data at the barangay (village) level. He said that any data needed was already in the hands of the government, such as the GSIS, Comelec and the Land Transportation Office.

"Privacy and privileged personal information will not lose their legal protection under existing laws as a consequence of the Supreme Court decision," Puno said.

When the national ID system was first proposed as an instrument against terrorism, information gathered from the barangays was planned to form its database.

Now, Puno said, the Department of Interior and Local Government would only be a support organization for the ID project.

"What is imminent is the consolidation of the ID cards of the different agencies. I don't think we will do data-gathering on anyone," Puno said. He said that the National Census and Statistical Office could handle the consolidation.





### ICE CANDIES

Children and adult alike enjoy free ice candies during a recent hike to Mt. Ta-pochau.

## OFW Support Group holds rummage sale

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration-OFW Support Group will hold a "Huge Rummage for a Cause" and tent sale the whole day tomorrow, Sunday.

The support group said it aims to assist all Filipino workers—not only those who are still in the CNMI but also those who have already returned home—through this fundraising activity.

OWWA welfare officer Mary D. Dait invites everyone on Saipan to participate in this cause-oriented activity.

Dait said the event would be held from 9am to 6pm tomorrow at the Minachom Atdao in Susupe in front of the Gilbert C. Ada Gym.

For those who want to participate and sell new or used clothes, a \$5 entry fee will be charged.

The OFW-Support Group will forward the proceeds of the one-day sale to OWWA's Tuloy-Aral Project,

through which the support group is sponsoring the education of children of former OFWs.

At least 68 CNMI individuals and groups have come forward to participate in this year's edition of the OWWA Tuloy-Aral Project.

Last school year, the Tuloy Aral Project in the CNMI ranked No. 1 among OWWA offices in the world after it managed to recruit 31 foster parents.

The Tuloy Aral Project is an OWWA project not only in the CNMI but also in other parts of the world where there are OWWA offices. It aims to help children of former overseas Filipino workers and other needy children in the Philippines fulfill their dreams of continuing their education. With the money, the children will be provided school necessities such as notebooks, pens, pads, bags, and books, among others. *(Marconi Calindas)*

### LABOR FRONT

## Food poisoning

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
REPORTER

**Q: Are the employers required to report to the Commonwealth Health Center in case of food poisoning?**

**A:** Employers shall report to the Division of Health Services and the Health and Safety Section any case of food poisoning or unusual prevalence of any illness in which fever, diarrhea, sore throat, vomiting or jaundice is a prominent symptom. According to the Alien Labor Rules and Regulations, employers shall also report to the Division of Health Services the name and address of any nonresident worker known to have or suspected to have a communicable disease.

n n n

**Q: If an alien worker is injured at his or her barracks, can he or she readily obtain first aid medicine from the employer?**

**A:** Employers are required to provide adequate first aid supplies available at the housing site for the emergency treatment of injured persons.

n n n

**Q: Can an alien worker transfer from one employer to another?**

**A:** Yes, the worker can do so provided that no qualified resident worker is available to fill the position to be filled by the transferring worker. The employer must also comply with applicable provisions of the Alien Labor Rules and Regulations. Job classifications and wage rates may be changed through the transfer process.

Submit questions on labor issues to *Saipan Tribune* via e-mail at editor@saipantribune.com, or by calling 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747 and leaving a message at Ext. 133 or 135. You may also submit questions in person by writing it down and dropping it off at the Saipan Tribune's office on the second floor of the Century Insurance Building on Beach Road, Garapan.

# Calling for nominees for this year's Presidential Award

By **MARCONI CALINDAS**  
REPORTER

All Filipinos are being invited by the Philippine Consulate Office and the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in the CNMI to nominate Overseas Filipino Workers for the 2006 Presidential Awards.

The President of the Philippines, in a ceremony, will confer the Presidential Awards on distinguished Filipino individuals and organizations overseas during the observance of the "Month of Overseas Filipinos."

This year there will be four awards to be given to outstanding migrant workers across the globe: the Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino Award, Banaag Award, Kaanib ng Bayan Award and the Pamana ng Pilipino Award.

The criteria for the selection this year are specific for each award. Some of the criteria for all the awards

generally include outstanding or significant services or contributions to benefit the Filipino people or nation. The nominees must have shown success, impact or effectiveness in the contribution, which could be in the form of personal or professional service, financial or material contribution, or technology that has proven to be beneficial.

The nominees must have shown dedication and commitment to work or profession or activities to contribute to progress and development in the Philippines.

If the contributions cited as bases for their nominations are specifically required to be among their official functions and duties, they are not eligible for nomination for this year's awards.

Former awardees, either in the same or other categories are also not allowed to participate anymore.

Any individual or organization, whether Filipino or foreign, based in

the Philippines or overseas, may submit nominations for the awards. Nominations must be made on the prescribed form and submitted together with supporting documents.

A duly completed nomination form must contain the following information: personal data, a summary of the relevant contributions made by the nominee, completed endorsement form to be completed by the Post's Awards Committee, constitution and by-laws and organizational logo or seal and excellent photographs in black and white.

The deadline for filing for nominations is on or before May 15. Failure to submit the required documents attached to the forms could cause the disqualification of the nominee from the awards.

For specific details on the criteria and other information visit the Philippine Overseas Labor Office at the Nauru Bldg. in Susupe.

## PIC concert to benefit Eli Wong

It is spring and you hear some strange sounds in the air. Find yourself swept away by the sounds of Broadways as you hear from the Phantom of the Opera. Experience a bit of jazz as you hear the music of Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong. Go back to days of fairy tales and ogres as you hear the

soundtrack from Shrek.

The Saipan Pacific Wind Ensemble will be performing their spring concert at the Charley's Cabaret of the Pacific Islands Club on April 23, 2006 at 4pm. Cost of tickets will be \$5 for adults and \$3 for students/seniors.

Ticket holders can enjoy a discount at The Magellan buffet as well as purchase desserts and beverages during the concert.

Contact Will DeWitt at 235-1087 for tickets. Shares of the proceeds will go to the help Eli Wong and his family. *(PR)*

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# Senators praise justices, claim win

By **TJ BURGONIO**  
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Praise from the Senate yesterday greeted the Supreme Court's ruling upholding Congress' right to compel the appearance of executive officials at its inquiries.

Senators who had locked horns with Malacañang over controversial Executive Order No. 464 of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo hailed the ruling as a sign of a working democracy and an independent judiciary.

They said it was both a vindication of the Senate, which had petitioned the high court to declare the order unconstitutional, and a slap on the Arroyo administration, which enforced it on Sept. 28, 2005.

Members of the House ma-

jority said the ruling proved that democracy was at work in the country, and called on Malacañang to promptly abide by it.

Militant groups said it compensated for the purported negative impact of the tribunal's ruling on Wednesday upholding the unified identification card system being pushed by Malacañang.

But later, Sanlakas described it as a "pyrrhic victory."

Senator Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the national defense committee inquiring into the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal, bluntly said: "I consider this a reprimand for the hasty adoption of controversial policies by the executive department."

And Senator Joker Arroyo, who had orally argued the Senate's case against a battery of government lawyers, described

the ruling as "predictable."

He said the high court could not have allowed the co-equality and the delicate balance of power between the President and Congress to be "impaired," or the "immutable doctrine of separation of powers and checks and balances so essential in our structure of government" to be "upset."

"Had the Supreme Court sustained the President, it would have ushered in a quasi-dictatorial presidency," the administration senator said in a statement.

"The President tried, the Senate opposed, the House stood idly by and the Supreme Court did its bounden duty," he said.

## Victory

"This is a victory for the Senate," declared Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan.

"This affirms our power to conduct inquiries and compel Cabinet and other government officials to appear in our inquiries in aid of legislation," he said in a phone interview.

He added: "They can no longer invoke EO 464 when we issue subpoenas to them to appear in inquiries in aid of legislation."

Pangilinan downplayed the high court's declaration that Cabinet officials were barred from appearing at the question hour and that the President could invoke executive privilege.

He said the senators had never questioned these points.

"The upholding by the tribunal of Sections 1 and 2-A of EO 464 is not an issue considering that these sections are mere reiterations of a provision of the Constitution on the

question hour and of the [high court's] rulings on executive privilege," he said.

"What was at issue," he said, was "the power of the legislature to compel Cabinet secretaries and other members of the executive branch to appear in hearings in aid of legislation under Section 21 Article 6 of the Constitution."

## Confidence

Pangilinan and Senate President Franklin Drilon also lauded the tribunal for its ruling.

"It affirms our confidence in our judicial system. It is proof that Malacañang acted beyond the confines of the Constitution and must be made to account for its illegal act," Pangilinan later said in a statement.

"This decision validates the Senate's position that as an insti-

tution, we have the constitutional duty to act as a check on a wayward executive branch," he said.

In a statement, Drilon pointed out that the "patently and brazenly unconstitutional" EO would have been "disastrous to our democratic system."

"Indeed, I am glad that we have a Supreme Court that is prepared to uphold the Constitution at all times. I certainly appreciate [its] independence," he said.

"This decision should remind Malacañang that ours is still a government of laws and not of men. It should make the President realize that she cannot overstep constitutional boundaries, specifically those provided under the principle of separation of powers between branches of government, just to suit her personal agenda," he said.

## RP summons Saudi ambassador over arrest of Filipino workers

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The Philippines summoned Saudi Arabia's ambassador to express concern over the detentions of 52 Filipinos in the Saudi city of Jeddah, reportedly part of an investigation into the murder of three other Filipino workers, officials said Friday.

The Philippine consul general in Jeddah reported to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila that two Filipino workers among those arrested had admitted to Saudi police that they killed three compatriots, and implicated two other Filipinos, who were subsequently detained.

Earlier this month, police in Jeddah reported finding plastic bags containing body parts—apparently from the missing Filipinos—and said they suspected the murders may be linked to illegal drugs, the liquor trade or gambling, according to a statement from the foreign affairs department.

Acting Foreign Secretary Rafael Seguis told Saudi Ambassador Mohammed Ameen Mohammed Wali on Thursday that the legal rights of the detained Filipinos should be respected, and that they should be informed of the specific charges against them and given the right to a counsel.

Interrogations "should be conducted without force or violence" and in the presence of Filipino diplomats, Seguis said, according to the statement.

## Stove fueled by 'tuba-tuba' launched in Leyte

By **VICENTE LABRO**  
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

**BAYBAY, Leyte**—An environment-friendly cooking stove that uses coconut oil and other plant oils like those from the "tuba-tuba" or *Jatropha* is now being sold in Leyte.

The stove, called Protos, resembles a kerosene pressure stove and can also use kerosene. But its manufacturer, Bosch and Siemens Home Appliances Group (BSH), is pushing for the use of plant oils, which are cheap and environmentally friendly.

"The plant oil stove is easy to operate and offers a very safe cooking environment because plant oil can neither burn nor explode," said Dr. Elmar Stumpf, BSH plant oil stove project manager.

Sisinio Balaga, 56, a resident

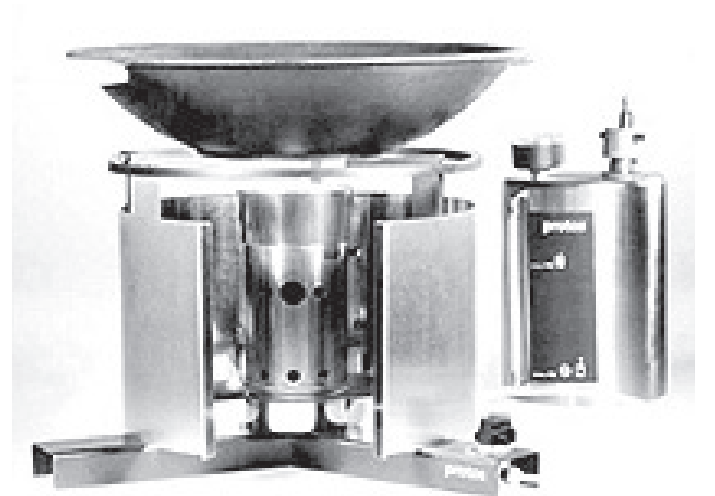
of Baybay town and a user of the plant oil stove for over a year now, said the new stove was not only user-friendly but efficient and affordable.

The stove cooks food faster than traditional stoves. "It takes only about 20 minutes to cook rice with the oil plant stove, while with a kerosene stove this usually takes about 30 minutes," Balaga said.

## Launching

A single-burner plant oil stove costs P2,000, while a two-burner costs P3,400. But the stove's local distributor has been selling the stove at a 25-percent discount until the end of the month, while those who joined the field test of the product like Balaga were given a 50-percent discount.

Protos was officially launched in Leyte province on



**A single-burner plant oil stove costs P2,000, while a two-burner costs P3,400.**

April 6, with German Ambassador Axel Weissaupt, BSH officials and experts from Germany in attendance.

Also present were Leyte Reps. Carmen Cari (5th district)

and Remedios Petilla (1st district), Governor Carlos Jericho Petilla, Leyte State University president Dr. Paciencia Milan and regional directors of government agencies.

## Fire hits army buildings at Fort Boni

By **DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN**  
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Dozens of firearms were destroyed after a fire hit two buildings inside the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio before dawn yesterday.

Army officials were quick to rule out arson. A spokesperson said initial findings showed the two-hour blaze was caused by faulty electrical wiring.

The fire broke out at 3:15 a.m. at the 9th Ready Reserve Division headquarters building and then spread to the adjacent Regional Command Defense Group building, according to Army spokesperson Maj. Bartolome Bacarro. The fire was put out around 5 a.m. without any reported injuries.

An initial inventory indicated that at least 30 M14 and M16 rifles were destroyed inside an armory attached to the 9th Ready Reserve Division building while about 57 other firearms were salvaged from the

fire, said Bacarro.

He said investigators are still determining how many firearms were destroyed at the adjacent building of the Regional Command Defense Group.

"We are ruling out sabotage. A security guard saw an electric spark at the 9th RR building before the fire. Initial investigation points to faulty electrical wiring," Bacarro said.

Meanwhile a fire also broke out in a public market on Real Street in Las Piñas City shortly after 3 a.m. Destroyed were two of the three buildings that made up the market.

The Aragon Building, a commercial complex, was owned by Rodolfo Aragon, while Poblacion Market was owned by Esperanza Yu, said Deputy Fire Marshal Aldwin Salazar. City fire marshal Senior Insp. Robert Pacis said a short circuit in one of the stalls could have triggered the fire. With a report by Jocelyn R. Uy



**Soldiers rummage through combat boots and other debris following a fire that razed the Philippine Army's Ready Reserved Division's armory (background) and another building before dawn Thursday April 20, 2006 south of Manila, Philippines.**



## PINOYSTYLE

# RP 'Idol' tryouts on

By **BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.**  
INQUIRER

"Philippine Idol" is looking for a few good men and women.

"We are taking pains in screening judges and hosts for the show," said Perci Intalan, vice president for Creative and Entertainment Production of ABC 5, which acquired the franchise for the world-famous reality talent search from FremantleMedia.

In the two of three audition days that ABC earlier set, over three dozen local celebrities have tried out so far—among them topnotch singers, artist managers and discoverers, TV

directors and record producers for the two remaining slots for judges. (Composer and music teacher Ryan Cayabyab is the only juror handpicked by the producers.)

Emcees, models, deejays, veejays and established TV personalities are after the two slots for hosts.

## Third and last

The third round of auditions is set this week.

As of press time, Intalan told Inquirer Entertainment, 23 have auditioned for hosts and 15 for judges. "I am so impressed because even big stars have no qualms about

auditioning," he said.

Added Terra Daffon, ABC 5 senior vice president for Corporate Affairs, "We are eyeing a tandem for the hosts, just like on 'American Idol.'" In the first season of "AI," Ryan Seacrest shared hosting chores with actor-comedian Brian Dunkleman.

## Should be smart

"The hosts don't need to be big names," Daffon pointed out. "Presenters can be virtual unknowns, as long as they are talented and smart enough to think on their feet. Just like Seacrest, who was a radio talent before 'AI.'"

As for the judges, Intalan

said, the producers want people who are "articulate and credible," as specified in the "Idol" manual, which all franchisees are obligated to follow.

Cayabyab met with Sheldon Bailey, consulting producer to "Philippine Idol," when the British TV executive was in Manila recently.

"I was delighted to meet him," Bailey said of Cayabyab. "He is passionate about music. Not only does he possess the technical expertise, he cares about the contestants and wants them to improve."

As FremantleMedia's "flying producer," Bailey travels to different countries that air "Idol" shows.

"In production meetings abroad, I always instruct the local producers not to look for a Simon Cowell," Bailey explained.

Cowell has made a name for himself as the notoriously nasty judge on both the original "Pop Idol" in the United Kingdom and its successful spin-off "American Idol" in the United States.

"In its first season, Cowell sent shock waves in the US," Bailey recalled, but cautioned that "the Cowell template may not work across countries and cultures."

She advised that "local franchisees should look for people that would click in their countries."

## Doesn't work

Bailey elaborated: "When someone tries to be a Simon Cowell, it doesn't work. It looks fake. They end up being rude even when it's not relevant. They imitate Cowell because they only want to be popular."

That's a no-no, she stressed, because "On 'Idol,' the stars are the contestants, not the judges."

"Credibility" is the cornerstone of the "Idol" show, Bailey said, and judges should strike a healthy balance between being supportive and being honest.

"In the beginning, Paula Abdul [of "AI"] seemed to have difficulty with that," Bailey observed. "Later on, she learned and adjusted [because the audience demanded it]."

Originally, she said, "AI" had four judges, but New York hip-hop radio deejay Angie Martinez resigned because she found it difficult to criticize contestants. "We really want the kids to develop. One way to do that is with no-holds-barred, constructive criticism. We want the hosts and judges to remain true to themselves."

# 12 out of 30,000 picked for 'PBB' teen edition

By **NINI VALERA**  
INQUIRER

As challenging as picking the winner in any "Pinoy Big Brother" edition is choosing the housemates.

PBB director and business unit head Lauren Dyogi said he has met about 30,000 wannabe housemates from all over the country during auditions held in Cebu, Davao and Manila for the reality show's forthcoming teen edition.

"About 30,000 teens eyeballed me during these auditions," he said, laughing.

Throughout the eyeballing, Dyogi, who was once a ramp model, had maintained a straight face even if some of the hopefuls tried very hard to make him smile or catch his attention by tumbling down the aisle. This was what happened during the last audition held at Dish inside the ABS-CBN compound last month during

which, Dyogi admitted, he had to make a lot of tough calls.

"I wish I could pick more," he said. "There is so much talent out there. But the playing field had to be narrowed down [to 12]."

Among the chosen ones, Dyogi hopes to discover fresh talent. Most of the teen housemates, he said, have expressed their desire to go into show biz.

Last week before the nation settled into a long weekend, Dyogi had come up with a short list of possible housemates. As usual, their identities are a tightly guarded secret, to be revealed only on April 23 when the show kicks off on ABS-CBN.

This much Dyogi revealed: eight of the teen housemates are from Luzon and Metro Manila, one is from Cebu, and three are from the Visayas.

The show will run until June 3.

Two evictions will be held each week starting May 13.

# Mon: Pinoys in London made it easy

Filipinos in London boosted the confidence of singer Mon David to emerge as grand champion in the recent London International Jazz Competition.

David cannot seem to thank them enough: "It was overwhelming. Up till the finals, they were nakatutok (keenly observing) including my batch mates (Pampanga High School Class '70), Ambassador Edgardo Espiritu and his staff."

Speaking to the Inquirer after a tribute by the provincial government and cultural groups in his home province, David added, "The glow on their faces while I performed was a big factor in my triumph." At no point did he feel he was in a foreign land, competing against 106 singers from 27 countries, he said.

Coming home to the big welcome on Monday, it was obvi-

ous the 52-year-old vocalist had not shaken off the joy from that euphoric bonding with compatriots. It was clear, David said, that he was in the tilt less for himself than for his country.

The only obstacle, if it could be called that, he said, was the cold weather.

Both the judges and his co-finalists had given the Filipino contender high ratings.

"One told me it was my focus on the lyrics that gave me the edge," David recounted. "Another said it was my confidence."

He credited his long years of experience as a performer in the Philippines. "Musically and technically," he said, "all the finalists were very good."

Also on Monday, President Macapagal-Arroyo officially congratulated David for the "well-deserved" triumph.

# Miriam Quiambao, minus the hubby

Hong Kong-based beauty queen Miriam Quiambao spent Holy Week in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, minus her Italian businessman hubby, Claudio Rondineli.

The morena stunner was often seen taking lots of pictures. "It seems photography is her new hobby," said an eyewitness. "People had snapshots taken with her, too."

## Black Saturday, sun tan day

Hot couple Jericho Rosales and Heart Evangelista hit the waves in San Juan, La Union during the holidays. The two were spotted getting a tan on Black Saturday near Echo's beach-front property.

## He wore a veil

Comedian John Lapus joined the Good Friday procession in Dinalupihan, Bataan, with some friends. John is said to have worn a veil to avoid catching too much attention. By the way, there's no truth to the rumor that John is playing the role of Dawn front man Jett Pangan in a forthcoming indie movie.

## Baby due in May

Donita Rose is hosting the fifth season of GMA 7's cooking show, "Mobile Kusina," starting today, taking over chores for Christine Jacob-Sandejas who is scheduled to give birth next month.

## All about bodies

Some babes with the best bods are still in Boracay. At least three of them—Mylene Dizon, Nancy Castiliogne and Reema Chanco—are not out there just to show off their curves. They're crew members for the Nestlé Fit In fitness fest, ongoing till tomorrow. Mylene will give belly dancing lessons; Reema, cardio boxing; Nancy,



Quiambao

hip hop aerobics. Hip hop aerobics?

## Kiss and break up... or battles in Bora

They meant to "patch things up."

But on-today-off-tomorrow couple Ethel Booba and Alex Crisano ended up duking it out at the Boracay police station. Ethel was reportedly jealous of a member of an all-female sexy group. He said: She scratched and hit him on the head. She said: He banged his own head against the wall.

Hmm, we can believe her. That would explain the dents we saw on the walls of the condo unit they used to share.

## Bora battle 2

Boracay wasn't big enough for another pair of bickering ex-lovers. Maui Taylor reportedly snubbed ex-boyfriend Brian

Revilla when they crossed paths in a restaurant where the entire clan was celebrating his mom Lani Mercado's birthday. Even so, Maui sent "Tita" Lani an SMS birthday greeting.

## Bora 'battle' 3

They were quarreling daw, but former sweethearts Gwen Garci and Andrew Wolff were spotted together on the island. Gwen explained to reporters, "He's trying to win me back." TV footage didn't make it look like she was playing hard to get. Tsk, tsk.

## Bora battle 4

Also seen on Bora last week were Joey Marquez and Alicia Mayer, who recently split up. They prudently partied on opposite sides of the island, however.

## Lighter, younger

Lorna Tolentino checked hus-

band Rudy Fernandez out of the hospital on Monday. She refuted reports that Daboy is set to go abroad for an extensive checkup or, as the rumor mills put it, "a second opinion." She said they had to cancel a planned vacation this month. Now, she said, Daboy is recovering well. She told Inquirer, sounding pleased, "He's 10 pounds lighter, and looks younger."

## How about... Pilita?

If she's willing to go through the requisite audition, Asia's Queen of Song Pilita Corrales, we think, should be an excellent judge for "Philippine Idol." Now, is she?

## Toni out

Toni Gonzaga is out of "Pinoy Big Brother" as main host and Mariel Rodriguez is taking her place. We wonder why? (Inquirer)

## Gong Li, believe it

Chinese actress Gong Li will star in "Believe It or Not," a new movie directed by Tim Burton, Hong Kong's Apple Daily newspaper reported. Gong starts filming in October with Jim Carrey, who will play Robert L. Ripley, the cartoonist who created the famous Believe It or Not! series. The report said Gong beat Ziyi Zhang to get the role. (AP)

## Does she mind?

But does Ziyi mind? The younger actress, who was recently named a Cannes juror, says she doesn't mind making Chinese movies, even if she has broken through Hollywood—as long as the scripts are high-quality. In fact, she is appearing in the upcoming court drama, "The Banquet," directed by Chinese director Feng Xiaogang. (AP)



# RP 4th biggest buyer of 'Asianovelas'

By **NINI VALERA**  
INQUIRER

The Philippines is the fourth biggest buyer of Asianovelas, according to Leng Raymundo, ABS-CBN vice president for program acquisition.

Raymundo, who is also the network's most-traveled executive, told Inquirer Entertainment that Japan is the top buyer, China the next biggest buyer, and then Taiwan.

Philippine-made telenovelas, like Jericho Rosales' "Pangako sa 'Yo," have also been exhibited in trade shows abroad, and Malaysia has, in fact, acquired the local soap.

Raymundo said the popularity of Asianovelas, which have become a staple for the prime-time programming of both ABS-CBN and GMA 7, could be attributed to the similarity in the cultures of these biggest buyers.

"Asians apparently have the same sentiments and sensibilities," she observed. "There's also

that kilig (thrill over romantic team-ups) factor in the shows that is also a common denominator in choosing what shows to buy."

The most popular Asianovelas these days are made in Korea, Raymundo added.

An Asianovela with a feisty heroine always scores high with top buyers, Raymundo said.

Other considerations, she said, are romance and comedy values of a show, plus action sequences.

So far, the all-time top rater among the Asianovelas is "Meteor Garden," which starred the popular Taiwanese boy group F4.

Raymundo stressed the cost-effectiveness of airing foreign acquired shows, saying that buying an Asianovela was less expensive than producing a local show in the magnitude of "Panday," even if the network has to dub the show in Filipino and create a local theme song for the show.

The network, she said, also spends a sizeable amount in promoting an Asianovela even if the stars are not here physi-



"Meteor Garden" starred the popular Taiwanese boy group F4.

cally for media events.

"If their schedules allow it, we always invite the stars to come here," Raymundo said. In the Philippines, Raymundo bids against rival network GMA 7

for Asianovelas.

She missed out on "Jewel in the Palace," which is now a ratings ruler on GMA 7, but she did not regret this, she said. "We have different tastes. I rely

mostly on my guts when I bid for a show. So far, my guts have not failed me."

Raymundo also predicted that Latin telenovelas like "Ruby" would be the next big thing in

Philippine television, although these might meet with some objection for being bolder and more adult in content.

ABS-CBN's latest Korean import is "Princess Lulu."

## Klownz 'fired' Sexbomb

Girls' manager says they didn't walk out on show

By **MARINEL R. CRUZ**  
INQUIRER

The Sexbomb Girls were kicked out of Klownz.

"As the group's manager, I had to find work for my artists," Joy Cancio told Inquirer Entertainment on Monday.

Cancio was reacting to widespread talk that the Sexbomb Girls packed up and brought their act to rival comedy bars in protest of their sudden dismissal as regular performers on the noontime television show "Eat... Bulaga!"

Klownz, located on Quezon Avenue, Quezon City, is partly owned by "Eat... Bulaga!" host Allan K. The Sexbomb girls used to perform there Thursday nights.

"It was on a Thursday morning that I received a call from Lito [Alejandria], saying the girls would not be performing at Klownz that night. Lito told me it was his decision," Cancio said.

Alejandria is Allan K's business partner and manager of Klownz and Zirkoh bars.

### Calm acceptance

"I accepted the news calmly," Cancio continued. The next day, when a TV crew interviewed Allan K, he said we didn't show up. So I called up Lito and told him that I would then have to find work for the girls."

In an earlier interview on the news program "24 Oras," Allan K said he was saddened not only by the fact that the girls had stood them up but also by the news that they performed at the

rival comedy club Punchline.

The Sexbomb Girls are now regulars at Punchline and Laffline, also in Quezon City.

"Why would we turn down an opportunity? When we were taken out of 'Bulaga,' the gig in Klownz was the only thing we had," said Sexbomb Mia Pangyarihan. "When we first found out we were jobless, everyone got tense—some even cried. That same night Ate Joy said, 'Don't worry, we'll find something.' That's how we got to perform at Punchline. What does Klownz have to do with 'Bulaga'?"

Cancio said she would rather not discuss her rift with Malou Choa-Fagar and Tony Tuviera, executives of Television and Production Exponents Inc. (TAPE) and producers of the show on GMA 7.

### Family feud

"I consider this a quarrel among family members," she said. "I've apologized to them via a text message to Malou. Let's leave all this behind."

"We have no quarrel with the other hosts," added Rochelle Pangilinan, leader of the all-female group. "I talk with some of them regularly until now."

Cancio also denied that the group has received offers from ABS-CBN. In fact, the 11th season ("Nasaan Ka?") of their afternoon soap opera on GMA 7, "Daisy Siete," will premiere on April 24.

### Meeting with Charo?

"It's not true, either, that I had a meeting with Charo Santos-Concio. I'd have bragged about that; it's the kind of person that I am," Cancio said. "Mother Lily (Monteverde) gifted me with a

box of tikoy once. I was so flattered, I had the box framed."

Santos-Concio is ABS-CBN's executive vice president and manager.

Cancio refused to discuss her falling out with former Sexbomb Sugar Mercado. A source close to both parties said the rift was due to Sugar's decision to sign a talent agreement with TAPE Inc. instead of renewing her contract with Cancio's Focus Entertainment Inc.

But Mia, the most outspoken member of the group, said her quarrel with Sugar began when the latter and her (Sugar) mother started saying "mean things" about her. "They said I wasn't fit to be a dancer, that I should be working as a prostitute. I don't know why Sugar's mom is such a bitter woman. Maybe because I replaced Aira (Bermudez) as the dancer on the program's 'TKO' segment. But that was a management decision, not because I'm anyone's favorite. I haven't met with Sugar since. Do I want to see her? If we bumped into each other at this time, I don't think I'd even talk with her. Dedma lang."

Rochelle said she recently received a text message from Sugar. The message read: "Gud am. Ate mahal ko po kayo. Alam ko po may tampo kayo sa akin. Ingat po lagi. Sori po sa abala. God bless. (I love all of you. I know you don't feel so good about me right now. Take care. Sorry for the bother)."

"I have only one thing to ask her," said Rochelle. "Why? I'm not angry, just disappointed. It's tough on Mia. Sugar singled her out and we don't know why. Maybe because Mia is one of the group's leaders. She's strict. She might have offended Sugar, who's really, really sensitive."

## Celebrity dancers go beyond their comfort zones

By **NESTOR U. TORRE**  
INQUIRER

We caught a previous season of the celebrity dance contest "Shall We Dance" on ABC-5 and found it occasionally compelling but more generally weak, because some of the celebrity contestants in question didn't work hard enough on their ballroom dancing challenges.

Happily, that can't be said of the show's latest edition, which had its monthly finals two Sundays ago. The celebrities vying for the terpsichorean tilt's top monthly prize were so good that, instead of two finalists, the show's jurors chose three—Mystica, William Martinez and Wowee de Guzman, with their respective dance partners—choreographers.

That was a tribute to the three team's talents, hard work and commitment, which placed them way above some other celebrity contestants who were unwilling to get out of their stellar comfort zones.

The three celebrity finalists weren't limited by such smugness or laziness. They threw themselves into the challenge at hand, momentarily forgetting that they were stars who no longer had to bust a gut to impress viewers.

As a result, they came up with dance routines that showcased them in a new light. In the process, they impressed the jurors, viewers—and even themselves! Best of all, they discovered that they had much more to develop in themselves, and thus got a new lease on their performing lives.

The first celebrity to strut his stuff in the finals was Wowee de Guzman. He and his partner danced so compellingly that they set a high standard for the other finalists to match.

Mystica and her partner opted for a slower number, but banked on a seductive partnership that enabled them to also raise viewers' temperature in their own way.

For his part, William Martinez complemented his dance number's choreographic flourishes with some tongue-in-cheek touches that were uniquely his.

Wowee put up a good fight, but when the smoke finally cleared up, it was Mystica who

romped off with the monthly finals' top plum.

In our book, however, all three finalist celebrities and their partners were winners because they went far beyond their comfort zones and pushed themselves to the limit in coming up with their truly outstanding dance numbers. May we all learn an inspiring lesson from their gutsy example.

### 'Ice Age 2'

In only 12 days, "Ice Age 2: The Meltdown" grossed P80 million nationwide, making it the biggest March release ever in the Philippines, and the biggest-grossing animated feature to be shown here. The film is a 20th Century Fox production released here by Warner Bros.

### 'Tipa'

Nyoy Volante jams with the country's top guitarists in "Tipa," a rare-musical event at the Teatrino in Greenhills, on May 10, 11, 12 and 13. Joining Nyoy are Paolo Santos, Pido, Noel Cabangon, Maegan Aguilar, Gary Granada and Ramon "RJ" Jacinto (May 11 and 13). Call 721-6726, 891-5610 or 533-0642.

### Backroom caravan

Backroom's summer musical caravan hits the Ynares Center in Antipolo on April 28, and the Mr. Golf Driving Range in San Fernando, Pampanga on April 29. Other performances: May 12 at Del Rio Splash Resort in Marbel City. May 13 at South Koronadal Gym and Cultural Center, also in Marbel. And May 20 at the De La Salle Gym in Bacolod City. Call 435-3808.

### Feedback

From Paul R. Mortel: "Last March 30, I viewed 'Moments of Love' at Cinema 3 at Gateway, Cubao. The theater did not [play] the Philippine National Anthem. Isn't this required?"

### 'Aliwan Fiesta'

The Manila Broadcasting Co., together with the cities of Manila and Pasay and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, is staging "Aliwan Fiesta 2006," grand national championship of all festivals, from April 27 to 29. Thousands of cultural dance performers from all over the country will participate in spirited street dancing that displays the richness of their respective regions' culture and traditions. Contests include the Dance Parade Competition, Float Competition and Reyna ng Aliwan beauty pageant. Huge prizes are at stake.



# OPINYON

## English is cool, Filipino English is 'kulang'

The latest survey by the Social Weather Stations (SWS) research group shows that Filipinos' self-assessed proficiency in English has declined. The March 2006 survey shows a decline in all aspects of English proficiency, compared to earlier SWS surveys done in 1993 and 2000. The latest nationwide survey was commissioned by the Promoting English Proficiency Project, a joint initiative by the American Chamber of Commerce in Manila and the Makati Business Club, and was also supported by several foreign chambers of commerce involved in an English-is-Cool campaign.

Before I pontificate on speaking the universal language of the 21st century, allow me a little confession. When my parents enrolled me in first grade in Lourdes School of Mandaluyong City, I struggled with the entrance test because, all things considered, I didn't speak a word of English.

I grew up in a purely Tagalog-speaking home, and during the exam, when the teachers asked me basic yes-or-no questions, I had to keep telling my six-year-old brain that "yes" meant "oo" and "no" meant "hindi." Mercifully, the school principal, Mr. Patricio Soliman, took pity on the hapless Tagalog-speaking kid, and I spent my next 10 happy and well-rewarded years on the sprawling campus on what was then a still bucolic Shaw Boulevard.

Many years later, when I was at Harvard Law School and I won coveted writing prizes, someone asked casually where I learned to write in English, expecting perhaps that I would answer,

"In Massachusetts." I proudly told him, "In Mandaluyong." (The urban legend has the legendary Manila Mayor Arsenio Lacson being similarly queried as he was getting off his ship, and shouting back, "In the boat!")

In the SWS survey, I was most interested in the findings on "personal use" of English, which I took to mean those who spoke English often in their daily lives, without being compelled by a teacher or a boss. Given a range of options, 5 percent said they made "full use" of English, 35 percent "fair use," 27 percent "partial use," 19 percent "no use" and 14 percent "no competence" in any way in English.

The results also show that personal usage was higher in Metro Manila and in the Visayas than in other areas, in the cities more than the provinces,

the Philippines to learn English. English-wise, we are way ahead of our Asian neighbors, but they are swiftly catching up. When I have foreign guests, they ask how they can give instructions to their Manila cab driver, and I say nonchalantly that they can speak in English to any cab driver and they will manage. Try doing that in Jakarta or Kuala Lumpur.

As Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov famously asked: What Is To Be Done? The most basic is to improve the English competency of the teachers themselves.

For my generation, all subjects were taught in English, and Filipino was used only in one subject called "Filipino" and the subject called "Language" was actually taught in English! We have since reformed. Today, we acknowledge that teaching the basic subjects to primary school children in a foreign language makes no sense. The child has enough problems with math, and then we compound his problems by teaching it in a language he doesn't understand. The young ones today learn many of their subjects in Filipino, and that is only wise.

The old approach bordered on some sort of "immersion," but it only resulted in all the subjects being taught in equally poor English. Since the goal is, for instance, to make math understandable, whatever that takes—and it is then left to the



### Passion For Reason

By RAUL PANGALANGAN  
INQUIRER

English teacher to undo the damage.

What I insist on is that the few times that English is taught, it must be taught well. Indeed, that is the reason Asian parents send their children to Manila; their teaching methods are so exam-oriented, so traditionally Asian, that they produce students who score 100 percent in vocabulary and grammar exams but can't order a Super Champ with fries at Jollibee.

The threshold problem of a back-to-English program is Taglish [Tagalog-English mix]. It feels so natural and easy, a practical Filipino solution when one fumbles around for words and intuitively strings together the best words to convey the exact thought from one mind to another. But, we must realize, that is true only if we will be talking just to one another all our lives, and in this globalized world, that will not happen.

What shouldn't be done is for schools to create a language police and penalize those who say "Aray" instead of "Ouch." I realize that this resembles the usual "language tables" used in schools abroad. But given our history with the English language, the "English-only zones" might seem too contrived and will turn away otherwise enthusiastic or sympathetic students.

Finally, I have elsewhere argued that the real bane of language teaching in our country is our colonial attitude toward foreign tongues, and our tendency to be embarrassed and to feel inferior that we do not speak it like their natives. Hey, it's just a way of talking and writing. Our inner selves, our dignity, are not diminished by not sounding or writing like them. But it is certainly imperative that we learn their tongue because we want to open the door to a new universe and, in the case of English, we desperately need it to compete for jobs and investments in increasingly competitive markets.

Comments to [passionforreason@gmail.com](mailto:passionforreason@gmail.com)

**'...the real bane of language teaching in our country is our colonial attitude toward foreign tongues, and our tendency to be embarrassed and to feel inferior that we do not speak it like their natives. Hey, it's just a way of talking and writing. Our inner selves, our dignity, are not diminished by not sounding or writing like them. But it is certainly imperative that we learn their tongue because we want to open the door to a new universe and, in the case of English, we desperately need it to compete for jobs and investments in increasingly competitive markets.'**

among the wealthier rather than poorer and, a pleasant surprise, more among the youth than their elders. The combined "full use-fair use" group thus brings to 40 percent the Filipinos who speak English on their own, lower than the 47 percent that registered in the September 2000 survey—disappointing though not disheartening.

Other Asian countries send their youth to

## Death and resurrection

Someone asked me in the deepest darkness of Holy Week if I had been tempted to give up on the country, too. Indeed, if I had not thought of leaving it at any time. I replied after some reflection: Who hasn't been driven to despair at some point over the last many months at our increased capacity to tolerate wrongdoing and willingness to grope blindly forward hoping to make progress? It's a scale of delusion that could sink the spirits of the most cheerful nun. But the moments of despair have come and gone, and I've always managed to glimpse resurrection at the end of death.

As to leaving this country, my equation has always been simple. The country of my birth is not unlike democracy: It's a horrible place to live in, but all the rest, at least for me, are worse. I find it so much easier to scale down my physical needs than my spiritual ones, my need for creature comforts than my need for self-respect.

My hope is by no means unfounded. The talent to be found among us is boundless, as evidenced by how well we've done abroad. We routinely get recognition in art, especially in music, and the sciences, notably in the many inventions Filipinos have patented here and abroad. We do not lack for ingenuity, we are cursed by it. Our capacity for improvisation has few peers, a fact we've often used to look for shortcuts

when simply taking the normal route is the easiest thing to do. We're so ingenious we become lawyers to do everything except obey the law. It is no great exaggeration to say if we could only channel our creativity to non-criminal activities, we could be one of the most prosperous nations of the world.

Over the last couple of weeks, since Thaksin Shinawatra resigned as prime minister of Thailand over corruption charges, in obedience to his King, I've been wondering what's made the Thais exceedingly prosperous and us exceedingly backward. As initial endowments go, we had all the advantages there. I still remember how, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Thais considered themselves lucky to be able to study at the University of the Philippines, notably at Los Baños, south of Manila. A decade or so later, they introduced jasmine rice to the world. A decade or so later, we were importing rice from the world.

Doubtless, a great deal of what laid us low was martial law. But many other Asian countries have known iron-fisted rule as well, and progressed anyway. Doubtless, too, what has allowed

Thailand to get far ahead in life owes to varied and complex reasons. But pride is clearly one of them. A sense of right and wrong is clearly one of them. It's not true at all that you can make the economy advance by thinking only about the economy. It's not true at all that you can prosper materially by thinking only about material things. A country doesn't have pride, it won't get anywhere. A country doesn't have a sense of right and wrong, it won't move—never mind "move on."

I don't need to harp on pride, it's patent. That is the one thing Thais have in great abundance—no small thanks to King Bhumibol, who represents not only a living continuity between past and present but also the best that Thais can be—and the one thing we now lack more abysmally than food. It's a vicious cycle: We've made a national motto of "beggars cannot be choosers" because we're backward, and we're backward because we've made a national motto of "beggars cannot be choosers."

The sense of right and wrong, well, that became patent with Thaksin resigning as prime minister a couple of weeks ago. If you need any more evidence to refute the silly notion that to get ahead in life you should forget about official

wrongdoing and concentrate only on the economy, just look at Thailand, Japan and Korea. In Japan and Korea in particular, being accused of stealing the people's money is enough to make an official resign—not to speak of being recorded on tape stealing the people's votes. It's no wonder they're prosperous: There is a correlation between prosperity and morality.

It is no accident that the words "moral" and "morale" are almost identical. A people's morality is the foundation of a people's morale. No morals, no morale. It is commonsensical: A country cannot progress without its people uniting, and a people cannot unite on the basis of wrongdoing. A country cannot progress without its people showing enthusiasm and a willingness to make sacrifices, and a people cannot show enthusiasm without justice. Wrongdoing or the forgetting of it can never be the cement that binds a people together. Injustice or the forgetting of it can never be the driving force that makes a people rise beyond themselves to reach for things that lie beyond their grasp. Justice disappears and wrongdoing riots, you will not think of the country first, you will think of yourself first. Which is what's happening to us right now.

All we need is an even break, all we need is a fresh start. There is talent and energy enough among us to push this country through. All we need is to unite



### There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS  
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

**'It's not true at all that you can make the economy advance by thinking only about the economy. It's not true at all that you can prosper materially by thinking only about material things. A country doesn't have pride, it won't get anywhere. A country doesn't have a sense of right and wrong, it won't move...'**

behind what is good and decent, all we need is to be led by someone we can trust. All it takes is for us to rediscover our sense of pride and dignity, our sense of aspiration and self-worth—which we do when we're abroad—and we will dazzle heaven itself with our resplendence. All it takes is for us to rediscover our sense of justice, our capacity to rail at what is evil and exult at what is good, and we will rise beyond ourselves, quite literally thinking of country first before self.

And as surely as morale flows from moral, as surely as the sun rises at dawn, as surely as resurrection follows death, we will find our way out of this dark night.

A belated Happy Easter to everyone.



# SAMU'T SARI



## BICOL ASSOCIATION

Members of the Bicol Association of Northern Mariana Islands gather for a photo during the annual pilgrimage to Mt. Tapochau on Good Friday.



## BIG BROTHER

Bayani officers and members perform a modern dance to the tune of Pinoy Big Brother Celebrity edition theme song's "Sikat ang Pinoy" during the OFW family fun day in March.



## OATH-TAKING

The Multi-Sectoral Overseas Filipino Workers Inc., or MOVER, held oath-taking of officers and board of directors for the year 2006-2007 on April 9, 2006 at the Philippine Overseas Labor Office. Here, members of the organization watch as their new officers are sworn in.



## BIRTHDAY GIRL

Nehemiah G. Villanueva during her 1st birthday party, which she celebrated at the Aliviera Restaurant on April 9, 2006. She is the first child of couple Lito P. and Josie G. Villanueva. The two were married on Saipan on June 5, 2004.



## FOLK DANCERS

Some Bayani officers and members danced the Pandango sa Ilaw/Wasiwas to represent the Filipino community on March 23 at the Garapan Street Market. They are shown here with some co-workers from Mariana Resort and Spa.



Folk dancers were, from left, Orly de Leon, Jhonnette Principe, Angelina Panelo and Damian Lastimado Jr.



Bayani folk dancers pose for a photo with our Philippine Consul General Wilfredo Maximo.

Bayani officers and members dancing the Pandango sa Ilaw/Wasiwas.

